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AUTHOR Preiss, Raymond W.
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ABSTRACT

Noting that communication scholars have devoted considerable attention to communication apprehension, this 27-item annotated bibliography, however, focuses on receiver-based anxiety or communication apprehension. The journal articles, conference papers, and theses listed were published between 1975 and 1988. Sections of the annotated bibliography are: conceptualization and review articles; receiver apprehension and listening effectiveness; receiver apprehension and information processing anxiety; receiver apprehension and information processing effectiveness; education level; and other resources. (RS)

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RECEIVER APPREHENSION

A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography

Raymond W. Preiss
The University of Puget Sound
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While communication scholars have devoted considerable attention to communication apprehension and related constructs, less concern has been devoted to receiver-based anxiety. Wheeless (1975) advanced receiver apprehension as ". . . .the fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others" (p.263) and developed a 20-item instrument, the Receiver Apprehension Test (RAT), for measuring the variable. Wheeless and Scott (1976) refined the RAT and produced a clearly superior instrument (the 16-item Revised Receiver Apprehension Test [RRAT]) that should replace the RAT in future studies.

I. Conceptualization and Review Articles.

Wheeless, L. R. (1975). An investigation of receiver apprehension and social context dimensions of communication apprehension. The Speech Teacher, 24, 261-268. This benchmark study provided the theoretical rationale for receiver apprehension and the Receiver Apprehension Test (RAT). A low, but significant correlation was detected between the RAT and the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension.

Wheeless, L. R., & Scott, M. D. (1976, April). The nature, measurement and potential effects of receiver apprehension. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Communication Association, Portland, OR. This paper reports the reconceptualization of receiver apprehension and the development of the RRAT instrument. A negative relationship was detected between the RRAT and information processing ability.

Preiss, R. W., & Wheeless, L. R. (1988, February). Affective responses to processing information: A meta-analysis of receiver apprehension outcomes. Paper presented at the meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association, San Diego, CA. Meta-analytic procedures revealed meaningful effect sizes between measures of receiver apprehension and listening effectiveness, information processing effectiveness, processing anxiety, and education level. Three theoretical explanations for receiver apprehension were reviewed.

II. Receiver Apprehension and Listening Effectiveness.

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Bocchino, I. L. (1985). An exploratory study of the relationship between listening comprehension, cognitive complexity, receiver apprehension, and mood state (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida, 1984). Dissertation Abstracts International, 45, 2692A. Cognitive complexity was found to be negatively correlated with receiver apprehension. However, no significant correlation was detected between receiver apprehension and listening comprehension.

Daniels, T. C., & Whitman, R. F. (1979). The effects of message structure, required recall structure, and receiver apprehension upon recall of message information. University of Wisconsin, Green Bay. (ERIC Document

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Reproduction Service No. ED 178 979). Low apprehensive receivers recalled significantly more information than high apprehensive receivers. Hypothesized interactions with receiver apprehension, message structure, and recall structure did not occur.

Paschall, K. A. (1985). The effect of receiver apprehension and source apprehension on listening comprehension. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida, 1984), Dissertation Abstracts International, 45, 1917A. Receiver apprehension was found not to be related to listening effectiveness, communication apprehension, or mood state.

Roach, D. A., Hauser, M. F., Jackson, J., & Hanna, M. S. (1985, March). The effects of receiver apprehension and noise on listening comprehension. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Listening Association, Orlando, FL. Predicted interactions between receiver apprehension and noise did not affect listening comprehension. Differences in the distribution of RAT scores were detected between two university populations.

Roberts, C. V. (1986). A validation of the Watson-Barker Listening Test. Communication Research Report, 3, 115-119. RAT scores were correlated (curvilinear) with long-term and total listening scores. Short-term memory was not found to be related to receiver apprehension.

III. Receiver Apprehension and Information Processing Anxiety.

Beatty, M. J. (1985). The effects of anticipating listening (state) anxiety on the stability of receiver apprehension scores. Central States Speech Journal, 36, 72-76. Anticipating a listening task was found to increase RAT scores. Results were interpreted as support for an assimilation approach to receiver apprehension.

Beatty, M. J., Behnke, R. R., & Henderson, L. S. (1980). An empirical validation of the receiver apprehension test as a measure of trait listening anxiety. Western Journal of Speech Communication, 44, 132-136. A correlation of the RAT with Spielberger's STAI (A-Trait) inventory suggested that receiver apprehension was a valid measure of trait listening anxiety.

Borzi, M G. (1986). A rose by any other name is not the same: An examination into the nature of shyness and other related constructs (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida, 1985). Dissertation Abstracts International, 47, 344A. Receiver apprehension was conceptualized as a component subset of general shyness. The RAT was found to be correlated with several shyness-type instruments.

Roberts, C. V. (1984). A physiological validation of the receiver apprehension test. Communication Research Reports, 1, 126-129. The RAT was correlated with arousal (tympanic temperature) during exposure to messages.

Williams, B. L. (1976). The development of a construct of information anxiety and its relationship to receiver apprehension. Unpublished masters thesis, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV. Receiver apprehension was found to be correlated with the Information Anxiety Scale, a measure of the individual's relationship with the information environment.

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IV. Receiver Apprehension and Information Processing Effectiveness.

Beatty, M. J. (1981). Receiver apprehension as a function of cognitive backlog. Western Journal of Speech Communication, 45, 277-281. Working from assimilation theory, a correlation was found between RAT scores and estimates of the overall magnitude of unassimilated information (cognitive backlog).

Beatty, M. J., & Payne, S. K. (1981). Receiver apprehension and cognitive complexity. Western Journal of Speech Communication, 45, 363-369. A negative correlation between the RAT and Schroder, Driver, and Struefert's Paragraph Completion Test (cognitive complexity) was interpreted as an explanation for the creation of cognitive backlogs.

Bock, D. G., & Bock, H. B. (1984). The effects of positional stress and receiver apprehension on leniency errors in speech evaluation: A test of the rating error paradigm. Communication Education, 33, 337-341. Highly receiver apprehensive raters were more lenient in their evaluation of a speaker when they were to deliver the next presentation. Low receiver apprehensive raters were least lenient immediately after they had delivered a presentation.

Daly, J. A., Vangelisti, A. L., & Daughton, S. M. (1987, November). The nature and correlates of conversational sensitivity. Paper presented at the meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Boston, MA. Receiver apprehension was negatively correlated with conversational sensitivity. Individuals with high conversational sensitivity were aware of subtle features of interactions, detected power and affinity relationships, and processed messages by making high level inferences.

O'Hair, H. D. (1982). Patient preferences for physician communication behavior: An analysis of treatment compliance strategies (Doctoral dissertation, The University or Oklahoma, 1982). Dissertation Abstracts International, 43, 1345A. High receiver apprehensive patients tended to prefer physicians to employ low affect, low information treatment compliance messages. Low apprehensives preferred high affect, high information strategies.

Preiss, R. W. (1987, February). Cognitive consequences of receiver apprehension: Evidence of reasoning about communication and self-persuasion. Paper presented at the meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association, Salt Lake City. A negative relationship was detected between the RAT and O'Keefe's Functional Integration of Communication Concepts. Results were interpreted as a constructivist account of receiver apprehension.

Preiss, R. W., Rindo, J., Fishfader, T., & Wickersham, T. (1985, May). Receiver apprehension and self-persuasion following counterattitudinal advocacy. Paper presented at the meeting of the Northwest Communication Association, Coeur D'Alene, ID. An interaction was observed between receiver apprehension level and active-passive participation in encoding a counterattitudinal message. High receiver apprehensives were found to exhibit more self-persuasion.

Scott, M. D., & Wheeless, L. R. (1977). The relationship of three types of communication apprehension to classroom achievement. The Southern Speech Communication Journal, 42, 246-255. A negative relationship was

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found between the RRAT and measures of student academic achievement (examination scores and project averages).

Sheahan, M. E. (1976). Communication apprehension and electoral participation. Unpublished masters thesis, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV. Low apprehensive respondents reported receiving a larger amount of election information than did highly receiver apprehensive respondents.

Wigley III, C. J. (in press). Student receiver apprehension as a correlate of trait argumentativeness: A research note. Communication Research Reports. A negative correlation between the RAT and trait argumentativeness suggested that skilled arguers were more successful at assimilating information.

V. Education Level.

McDowell, E. E, & McDowell, C. E. (1978). An investigation of source and receiver apprehension at the junior high, senior high and college levels. Central States Speech Journal, 29, 11-19. Main and interaction effects were observed for education level and gender on RAT scores. Also, a substantial correlation was detected between the RAT and communication apprehension.

McDowell, E. E., McDowell, C. E., Pullan, G., & Lindbergs, K. (1978, May). An investigation of source and receiver apprehension between United States and Australian students at the high school and college levels. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Communication Association, Minneapolis, MN. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 033) Main effects were detected for education, gender, and country on RAT scores. No interaction effects were observed.

VI. Other Resources.

Evans, S. A. (1985). Within-channel redundancy versus between-channel redundancy in instructional material and its association with amount learned (Doctoral dissertation, North Texas State University, 1985). Dissertation Abstracts International, 46, 1118A. The RAT was used as an ancillary instrument in this study on the effects of audio-visual media and listening skills.

McDowell, E. E., McDowell, C. E., Hyerdahl, J., & Steil, L. K. (1978, November). A multivariate study of demographics, psychological sex-roles, and communication apprehensions. Paper presented at the meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Minneapolis, MN. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 166 735) Androgynous respondents scored lower on the RAT. Also, demographic variables (age and education level of parents) were negatively related to RAT scores.

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